

OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

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Am seriously disturbed at apparent lack of interest on part Secretariat in great importance of aerial photographic surveillance in carrying out task in Cuba. While we have made available to the Secretariat fullest information (derived almost entirely from aerial photography) on characteristics and locations of weapons as of forty-eight hours or more ago, this by no means is necessarily a complete inventory of offensive weapons in Cuba or their locations as of the time UN begins its operations. While aerial photography does not guarantee one hundred percent knowledge of situation nevertheless it is vastly superior, more thorough, more efficient and economical than Nineteenth Century approach based entirely on observation on the ground confined to previously established weapon sites. This is particularly true where weapons concerned are of mobile field type not requiring elaborate fixed bases. Thus we consider it essential that every effort

Drafted by:

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Telegraphic transmission and

classification approved by:

George W. Ball

Clearance:

- Mr. Kent

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effort be made to impress on Secretariat importance of aerial photography as an essential supplement to ground observation in carrying out its task of verification. As you know, we stand prepared ^{UN} immediately assist ~~you~~ in any way agreeable to it and have made substantial preparations that would permit UN begin this mission tomorrow including possibility of flying UN marked planes carrying UN observer. If even with this assistance UN unwilling, or unable undertake mission tomorrow, we must assert position that we have preserved our freedom of action and will undertake mission ourselves, recognizing however that this politically less desirable than UN mission and physically more dangerous. Only in this manner can we carry out obligation to forestall any chance trickery endangering our national security. Of course results such mission would be made available to UN to assist it in its task. If UN does not intend undertake aerial reconnaissance US may find it necessary in its own protection continue reconnaissance.

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